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C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 000137

SIPDIS
NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2020
TAGS: IO PHUM UNGA AS
SUBJECT: DESPITE PASSPORT INCIDENT, PROBABLE "NO" VOTE ON
GOLDSTONE

REF: SECSTATE 15722

Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor Edgard D. Kagan for reasons 1.4(b)(d)

Anger Over Israeli Use of Passports

¶1. (C/NF) Australia is likely to support the U.S. position and vote against the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Goldstone report. The recent revelations that suspected Mossad agents used fake Australian passports to enter Dubai and kill a Hamas commander have made this decision more complicated. Joel McGregor, an Executive Officer in the Middle East Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), said that Australian officials are "furious" all the way up the chain of command over the incident, and Prime Minister Rudd has vowed to get to the bottom of it. Foreign Minister Smith held a press conference February 25 to say he had summoned the Israeli ambassador and told him that Australia expects full cooperation from the Israeli government with its investigation into the passport fraud. In the wake of the revelations from Dubai, the government is in no hurry to reassure Israel of its support.

Support for U.S. Position Still Likely

¶2. (C/NF) Despite the harsh rhetoric coming from government officials, McGregor said Australia is highly unlikely to reverse its previous "no" vote on the Goldstone Report. He believes the Palestinian resolution is a blatant attempt to keep the Report alive, and said it would be overly confrontational for Australia to reverse its previous position. DFAT will submit its recommendation to the Foreign Minister later today and will draw from the language in reftel demarche to recommend that Australia vote "no" on the resolution. McGregor feels strongly that Australia will ultimately support the U.S. position, but given the current atmosphere nothing is certain.

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